

Utah State University

DigitalCommons@USU

The Utah Statesman

Students

1-2016

2015-2016 Basketball Preview

Utah State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/newspapers>

Recommended Citation

Utah State University, "2015-2016 Basketball Preview" (2016). *The Utah Statesman*. 288.
<https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/newspapers/288>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Students at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Utah Statesman by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usu.edu.



2015-16 BASKETBALL PREVIEW



FAMILY MATTERS:

MOORE BROTHERS TAKE
THE COURT

SLAMMIN' IT:

WHY DUNKS ARE
EFFECTIVE

TIM'S TIME:

COACH DURYEA
AT THE HELM

Best Tire Value PROMISE

Whatever the road throws at you, from potholes to nails—any road hazard, our **FREE GUARANTEE** protects you

WITH EVERY PASSENGER & LIGHT TRUCK TIRE PURCHASE



Peace of Mind Tire Protection

- If a Tire is Damaged Beyond Repair, We'll Replace its Value
- Our Work is Guaranteed for the Life of Your Tires
- Free Pre-Trip Safety Checks

Lifetime Tire & Mileage Care

- Free Flat Tire Repairs
- Free Tire Rotations
- Free Tire Rebalancing
- Free Air Checks
- Free Brake & Alignment Checks
- Hundreds of Location to Serve You

Tires **LES SCHWAB**

Doing the Right Thing Since 1952®

TWO AREA LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU:

LOGAN

36 W. 1200 S.

435-753-3895

NORTH LOGAN

1986 N. MAIN ST.

435-787-9850

**TIRES • BRAKES • SHOCKS • ALIGNMENTS • WHEELS • BATTERIES
CONVENIENT CREDIT • WARRANTIES IN WRITING • SUDDEN SERVICE**

Table of Contents

4 10 Reasons to Watch

6 Duryea Profile

14 Dunks

16 Spectrum Magic

22 Not So Free

26 3 point Shots

28 Conference Preview

10 REASONS to watch

By **Brandon Gardner**

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

1. The Utah State women's team was ranked No. 1 in the conference in free-throw percentage with an average of over 73 percent at the line last year.

2. The Aggie women recorded the highest one-game field goal percentage in the nation last season. They shot over 70 percent against Sacramento State on Dec. 19 of last year. The Aggies' field goal percentage overall last year was nearly 40 percent, beating their opponent's average of just under 39 percent.

3. Funda Nakkasoglu was fourth in the conference in scoring averaging at more than 17 points a game last year. She was also third in the conference in assists, averaging almost five per game and was named the Mountain West Freshman of the Year.

4. Nakkasoglu also led the Aggies in free-throw percentage with 80 percent. She set a Mountain West record for free throws made and free-throw percentage in a single game 14-14 against San José State in the MW Tournament.

5. The women's team forms a diverse group, with players from five nations and five different states within the United States. There are players from Australia, France, Brazil, Serbia, Texas, Montana, Connecticut, Oklahoma and Utah.

6. USU is returning just six players from last year, and only one starter — Funda Nakkasoglu. The team has nine newcomers this year.

7. With international players and all-around great names, you may want help this season. Here's a pronunciation guide:
Antoina Robinson — Ant-wan-uh
Julianne Anchling — On-shling

Finkbeiner — Fink-by-ner
Tijana Djukic — Tee-yana Duke-ich
Funda N kasoglu — Foon-da Knock-a-so-glue

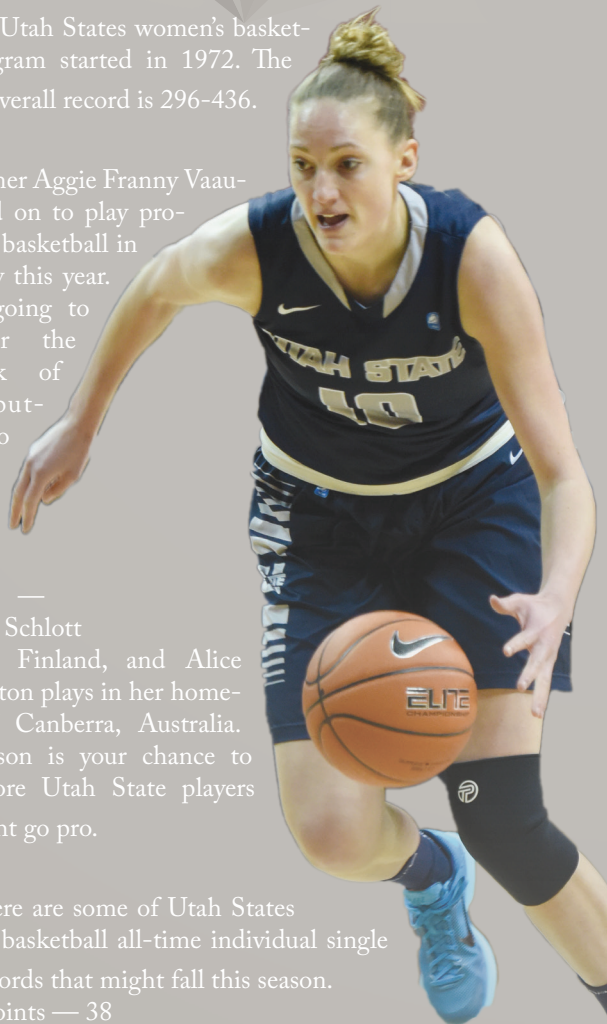
8. The Utah States women's basketball program started in 1972. The Aggies' overall record is 296-436.

9. Former Aggie Franny Vaau-
lu signed on to play professional basketball in Germany this year.

She is going to play for the Wolfpack of Wolfenbuttel. Two other Aggies currently play overseas — Jennifer Schlott plays in Finland, and Alice Coddington plays in her hometown of Canberra, Australia. This season is your chance to meet more Utah State players that might go pro.

10. Here are some of Utah States women's basketball all-time individual single game records that might fall this season.

Most points — 38
Most rebounds — 22
Most assists — 14
Most steals — 12
Most blocked shots — 8



PHOTOS BY **Kylee Larsen**
Julianne Anchling

MEN'S BASKETBALL

1. Utah State is predicted to place third in the conference this year according to the MW preseason poll. The Aggies were 11-7 in conference play last year and they tied for fourth place in the Mountain West Conference. They set the record with 11 wins — the most wins by a team in its second year in the conference.

2. USU was ranked No. 8 in the nation and first in the conference last year in turnovers, averaging only about 10 per game.

3. Since 2000, the Aggies have won nearly 90 percent of their home games in the Spectrum. USU's all-time record in 46 seasons in the Spectrum is 542-125, which is nearly 82 percent.

4. Utah State was 14th in the nation and No. 1 in the conference last year in 3-point percentage with at nearly 40 percent. They were two spots above in-state rival BYU.

5. The Aggies will have 18 of their games covered on national television this year.



David Collette

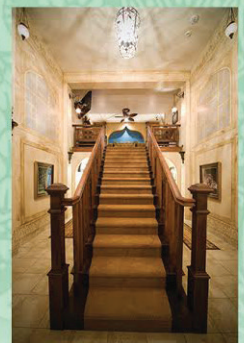
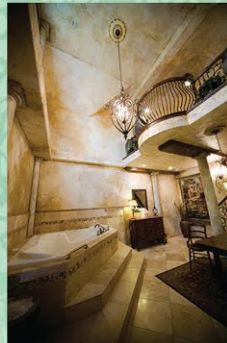
6. In the last 15 years, Utah State has won 73 percent of its games, which is sixth in the nation. The only teams above the Aggies are Florida, Kentucky, Gonzaga, Kansas and Duke at the No. 1 spot.

7. Bleacherreport gave USU the only honorable mention to its top-five college fanbases in the nation. Once again, the Aggies find themselves on a list with some of the most respected teams in the nation. The top five were Kansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Duke and Syracuse.

8. According to an article for SBnation by Bill Hanstock, Utah States has the best hair in all of college basketball. Jalen Moore was ranked individually with the 3rd best hair and former Aggie Sean Harris was voted 2nd. Besides having the best hair on the team, Jalen Moore also led the USU in rebounding averaging nearly seven per game.

9. David Collette is 14th in the nation and first in the MW in shooting, with about 59 percent. He also led the team in blocks, averaging almost two blocks each game.

10. Chris Smith shot at over 47 percent from the 3-point line last season. That is the fifth best single season percentage in school history.



SPECIAL RATES FOR USU Students and Alumni

435.752.3443 | 169 East Center St, Logan



*Every Stay
is a Story!*



PHOTO BY Annie Hall

HIS TIME

By **Kalen Taylor**

"Tim Duryea is a class act," said eight-year assistant basketball coach Tarvish Felton. "You couldn't have found a better guy or a guy that loved Utah State more than Tim Duryea."

Duryea will be taking over the USU basketball program after the retirement of 17-year head coach Stew Morrill last season.

"It's been really easy," said sophomore forward David Collette. "Stew really prepared us for that transition. He told us midseason so we would have plenty of time to get ready. I think he did a good job of passing it off. Coach Duryea deserves it and we knew him so it was easy."

With 14 years of assistant coaching experience at USU under his belt, Duryea had

been the longest-tenured assistant coach in program history before taking over in April of 2015 and becoming the 18th head coach for the Aggies.

"If it's not broke, don't fix it," Felton said. "The program has never been broke. We have the sixth best winning percentage in the last 15 years. Coach Duryea deserved an opportunity."

While at Utah State, Duryea has been part of an Aggie program that has averaged over 23 wins per season. The team has also advanced to the NCAA Tournament six times and won five conference championships in the Big West and Western Athletic Conferences and an additional four conference tournament titles.

While many Aggie fans

were hoping for an out-of-the-program hire to change the look of USU basketball, Duryea has already brought a lot of change to USU.

"He's been totally different as a head coach than as an assistant," said junior wing Jalen Moore. "He wanted to change some things and that's what he's done. A lot of us are happy with what he's done."

He's held the first open practice in at least 15 years, hosted a Primetime Madness showcase and encouraged fan involvement.

"We want the fans to be involved this year," said junior guard Julion Pearre. "We want them to get to know us a little more. We're doing different things so we can interact with them because they are a big part of us."

Along with the changes to publicity and open doors, Duryea has implemented changes to the gameplay in the offensive and defensive schemes of the team.

"He changed a lot," Moore said. "We don't have the flip cards we used and we're picking up the intensity on defense. We're looking to deny more instead of just being in an open stance. We're trying to speed up the game a little bit — have a more free-flowing offense and more intensity on defense."

During his first seven seasons at USU, Duryea coached the Aggie defense, which ranked top 10 nationally in points allowed in 2002, 2003 and 2005.

"Intensity in defense is a big part of this year," Pearre said. "Defense, defense defense."

We're trying to create a house of bricks where we are all one and nobody scores on us. The biggest difference is the defensive aspect."

Sophomore forward Elston Jones said the biggest difference though comes on the offensive side of the ball.

"Most of the offense is the same, the team is the same," Jones said. "The only thing that's been different is we have more freedom on offense. Coach has faith in us that we can provide offense without having to set up a play."

In the last seven years, Duryea has led the USU offense. The 2014-2015 season saw Utah State lead the Mountain West and rank No. 14 nationally in 3-point shooting at just over 39 percent. In 2013-2014, Utah State was ranked second in the nation, at over 40 percent from 3-point range.

"We're trying to play with a little more tempo because of the shot clock," Duryea said. "We want to play with a little more flow on offense."

During the 2009-10 season, Utah State ranked third nationally in 3-point field goal percentage shooting over 41 percent. The Aggies were ninth in overall shooting just under 49 percent and No. 10 in free-throw shooting with more than 75 percent. USU was the only team in the nation to rank among the top 10 in all three shooting categories.

During the 2008-09 season, USU finished the year as the nation's best shooting team at nearly 50 percent. Felton said the team will retain the good qualities while working to add to the offense.

"You'll see a lot more open and more flow offensively. For the longest time you would see us walk up

the floor and call a set play. You'll see guys playing with a lot more freedom. We are going to try and play faster," Felton said. "The standard of execution won't change. The discipline with which we run our program won't change. We are going to be Utah State, blue-collared and hardworking. We're going to be fun to watch— not that we weren't fun to watch before, but a different fun to watch."

Expectations are high for Duryea in his first season as Utah State's head coach. Last year, the Aggies were picked to finish next-to-last in the Mountain West. This year, Utah State returns all five starters from last season and has been picked to finish third in the MW.

"The team chemistry is already there," Moore said. "We know what the coach expects. We know kind of how he wants to play.

When he got hired, we were happy for him ... We all liked the hire and it will show when we play our first game."

Jones agreed with Moore that Duryea was the right man for the job.

"I was very excited," Jones said. "I feel like he's going to be a good fit for us. We already have a relationship with everyone on the team and the coaching staff. It just keeps it going."



PHOTO BY Kylee Larsen

HAIRCUTS INC

No matter what your style is...

ANY HAIRCUT

\$9.99

Not valid with other offer. Limit one coupon per person. Must have coupon at time of visit.

HAIRCUTS INC

OFFER EXPIRES: 2/28/16

MEN'S BUNDLE

\$20

- Haircut
- Shampoo & style
- Shiatzu back/scalp massage
- Hot towel
- Straight edge neck shave

Not valid with other offer. Limit one coupon per person. Must have coupon at time of visit.

OFFER EXPIRES: 2/28/16

HAIRCUTS INC



B
FOR LARRY

**1545 N MAIN
LOGAN, UT**

(in front of Hobby Lobby)

435-535-3638

www.haircutsincorporated.com

MEN'S POSITION PREVIEWS



GUARDS

Point guard Darius Perkins returns for his senior year and will look to once again be a key contributor to assisting his teammates after finishing fourth in assists per game in the Mountain West and totaling a team best 101 last season. Perkins will also look to continue his great 3-point shooting after hitting over 42 percent from beyond the arc, good for fourth in the Mountain West.

At the two guard, sharp shooter Chris Smith returns for his senior year after starting every game for the Aggies last season. Smith will look to build off of his junior season in which he finished honorable mention all-Mountain West, as well as being second in 3-point percentage in the conference at over 47 percent.

Julion Pearre will look to increase his role alongside Smith. The duo started the last 24 games together and the team compiled a record of 15-9 in that stretch. The

duo had 28 double-digit scoring games collectively. A fresh face on the roster is Miami-Dade junior college transfer Shane Rector, transferring from the same school as Perkins. Rector will look to compete for playing time amidst an already skilled group of guards and look to replicate the energy that departed with fan favorite JoJo McGlaston. Rector scored 20-plus points in nine games and 30-plus in two games last season, proving he can score in bunches.

Other freshmen who will compete for playing time will be Jake Miles and John Middleton. Miles led Morgan High School to the Utah 3A state title while averaging over 24 points per game en route to winning the Salt Lake Tribune 3A MVP. John Middleton hails from Atlantic City, New Jersey. Middleton averaged over 17 points to go along with more than seven assists per game his senior season.

PHOTO BY **Johnny Morris**
Chris Smith



PHOTO BY **Johnny Morris**
Henry Bolton III



PHOTO BY **Kylee Larsen**
Shane Rector

SMALL FORWARDS

Junior wing Jalen Moore looks to have another strong season at small forward after averaging over 15 points, six rebounds, and 34 minutes per game last year. Moore finished the season in the top 10 in the Mountain West in all three of those categories. Last year, Moore showed that he can have a huge impact on both sides of the ball, as he hit the 20-point mark five times over the course of the season and eclipsed 10 rebounds four times.

Senior Trace Cureton looks to have a larger role this year after averaging just over six minutes per game last year. Cureton showed off his offensive abilities during his time at Sinclair Community College, where

he averaged over 16 points per game and shot over 48 percent from 3-point range.

Senior Grayson Moore, older brother of Jalen and a Cache Valley native, redshirted last year after transferring from Northwest Nazarene University. Grayson Moore averaged over 10 points and seven rebounds for NNU.

Freshman Quinn Taylor redshirted his first year at Utah State in 2012-13 before leaving for an LDS mission in Brazil. Taylor averaged over 11 points and five rebounds at Langham Creek High School in Houston, Texas.

POWER FORWARDS

Although Utah State lacks a true center, they will lean on sophomore forward David

Collette, who is considered potentially the best post player in the conference and led the Aggie front court while playing over 25 minutes per game. As a freshman, Collette recorded 56 blocks — the fourth most in a season in USU history — and shot over 59 percent, which led the Mountain West and ranked 14th nationally.

Listed at 6-foot-9, 265 pounds, sophomore Elston Jones looks to give the Aggies a big body up front. Although he averaged under 10 minutes per game, Jones has shown that he can be a presence on the defensive end. He grabbed nine rebounds against UC Davis and also recorded three blocks and three steals against Nevada.

Junior Lew Evans also redshirted last year after trans-

ferring from Tulsa. Evans averaged over 5 points, 4 rebounds and 20 minutes per game at Tulsa. Evans also helped Tulsa to a Conference USA championship and a trip to the NCAA tournament.

Sophomore Alexis Dargenton is a transfer from Laramie Community College. Dargenton averaged over 12 points and seven rebounds at LCC while leading the team with 10 double-doubles. Though he will likely redshirt this season, Dargenton is a talented scorer to watch in the future.

Many of the Aggie players in the three, four and five spots on the floor will rotate. The athleticism and diversity of all the forwards allows the coaches to mix lineups depending on opponents and game situations.

PROJECTED STARTERS

MEN



JALEN MOORE
NO. 14 | HT. 6-9
POSITION: WING



DAVID COLLETTE
NO. 13 | HT. 6-10
POSITION: FORWARD



DARIUS PERKINS
NO. 2 | HT. 6-2
POSITION: GUARD



CHRIS SMITH
NO. 34 | HT. 6-4
POSITION: GUARD



JULION PEARRE
NO. 5 | HT. 6-3
POSITION: GUARD

KEY BENCH PLAYERS



SHANE RECTOR
NO. 4 | HT. 6-2
POSITION: GUARD



ELSTON JONES
NO. 50 | HT. 6-9
POSITION: FORWARD



LEW EVANS
NO. 12 | HT. 6-9
POSITION: FORWARD



GRAYSON MOORE
NO. 32 | HT. 6-7
POSITION: FORWARD

PROJECTED STARTERS

WOMEN



FUNDA NAKKASOGLU
NO. 3 | HT. 5-7
POSITION: GUARD



TIJANA DJUKIC
NO. 22 | HT. 6-4
POSITION: FORWARD



ANTOINA ROBINSON
NO. 41 | HT. 6-2
POSITION: FORWARD



KATIE TOOLE
NO. 31 | HT. 5-10
POSITION: GUARD



RACHEL BREWSTER
NO. 25 | HT. 5-11
POSITION: GUARD

KEY BENCH PLAYERS



VICTORIA PRICE
NO. 1 | HT. 5-8
POSITION: GUARD



JULIANNE ANCHLING
NO. 10 | HT. 6-3
POSITION: FORWARD



LINDSEY JENSEN
NO. 11 | HT. 5-9
POSITION: GUARD



DEJA MASON
NO. 44 | HT. 6-4
POSITION: GUARD

WOMEN'S POSITION PREVIEWS



GUARD

It's no secret who will lead the Aggies in scoring this season. It will be the same person that did last year. Sophomore guard Funda Nakkasoglu. She averaged 17.4 points per game last year as a freshmen and will likely only improve on this. She also scored almost 300 more points than any other Aggie last season. Nakkasoglu was picked to the preseason all Mountain West team. She is also the only returning starter for USU.

Senior Mariah Miles and sophomore Baylee Peck are the only guards returning who saw any time last year. That being said they did not see much. Miles played in 25 games averaging 7.3 minutes per game while Peck only saw the court in 12 games averaging 3.5 minutes per game. Between the two of them they had 33 points last season. That being said both will see an expanded role this season.

Six of the nine newcomers to the team are guards. Two of the incoming freshmen were all-state MVP's in their respective classifications in Utah. Those two were Lindsey Jensen from Sky View and Katie Toole High from Viewmont High School.

The Aggies have also once again tapped into their Australian pipeline to help their backcourt with freshman Rachel Brewster. She averaged 15 points per game in her senior year in Australia enroute to winning her high school championship. She also has experience with Australia's U20 national team. She should be a feature player for USU this season.

Despite the new faces, or perhaps because of them, USU's guards should be a strength of the team. The Aggies will rely heavily on them for the majority of their point total — especially for leadership with Nakkasoglu looking to improve

on her freshman campaign.

SMALL FORWARD

Junior Antoina Robinson joins Utah State this season bringing much-needed height and athleticism to the USU roster. Robinson is 6-foot-2 and will likely split time at the small forward and power forward spots. Robinson is originally from Dallas, Texas but played one season at Arkansas—Little Rock and before spending a season at New Mexico Junior College, then making her way to Utah State.

Fellow New Mexico Junior College transfer Angelica de Paulo is also a 6-foot-2 forward. She's from Sao Paulo, Brazil and she averaged 16.5 points per game, shooting 43.2 percent from the floor, 40.0 percent from 3 and 73.7 percent from the free-throw line while at NMJC.

The Aggies will most often run a three-guard system on the court meaning these players

will rotate between the three and four spots when they play. Joining the two forwards at the three will be guards Rachel Brewster, Katie Toole and Lizzy Klinker.

Toole and Klinker are both 5-foot-10 freshman guards. While at Viewmont High School, Toole was named the Utah 5A MVP with first-team all-state honors as a senior. She averaged 24.2 points, 4.7 rebounds, and 2.4 assists per game as a senior, shooting 49.4 percent from the field, 43.1 percent from 3-point range.

Toole was also a track and field athlete, winning the high jump state title as a senior.

Klinker averaged 16.5 points, 9.4 rebounds, 3.4 steals and 1.7 blocks per game as a senior. She was nominated as a McDonald's All-American and Gatorade Player of the Year and spent time playing club basketball for Montana Hoops before coming to Utah State.



POWER FORWARD/CENTER

The frontcourt is where the Aggies return the most players.

Coming from Kikinda, Serbia Tijana Djukic is 6-foot-4 and listed as a forward. She played in 31 games last season and started nine. Djukic is in her final season at USU and will likely get a big boost in minutes this season from the average of 18 she played last year.

Another foreign forward is Julianne Anchling out of France. Anchling is 6-foot-3 and started in eight games last season while appearing in 16. She averaged 4.6 points and 2.4 rebounds per game and shot 39 percent from the field. Hannah Hutchins is a 6-foot-4 center from Connecticut.

She's a sophomore and played in 29 games last season while starting 12. She averaged 13.6 minutes and 5.4 points while adding 2.9 rebounds per game. She shot 54.8 percent during the season. The Aggies' experienced forwards will allow them to redshirt players that may need more development and prolong the depth of the team.

Joining the trio of veterans is 6-foot-4 freshman center Deja Mason from San Antonio, Texas. Mason averaged 8.8 points, 11.7 rebounds and 4.5 blocks per game as a senior at Brennan High School. She also played at the club level for San Antonio Finest before joining USU.

PHOTO BY **Kylee Larsen**
Funda Nakkasoglu

DUNKS

By **Thomas Sorenson & Kenna Cook**

PHOTO BY **Kylee Larsen**
David Collette

"We've already done that research," said Jerry Finkbeiner, head coach of the Utah State women's basketball team. "There's actually seven layers of shot efficiency... Our gameplan is all based on those layers."

The research done by Finkbeiner and his team consid-

ered all the possible outcomes of a possession and ranked them according to positive impact.

Layer one is a fast-break opportunity, which most often occurs after a steal. That puts pressure on the defense before it can get set, leading to easy scoring chances. Layer

two is free throws. Layer three is a scoring opportunity after an offensive rebound. Like a fast break, an offensive rebound gives the team a clean shot before the defense can recover. Next, layer four, is shots within ten feet of the hoop. Finkbeiner refers to this area of the court as the

"red zone." The fifth layer is shots beyond the 3-point line. There is a significant drop in efficiency before layer six, which is mid-range shots — between the "red zone" and the 3-point line. The seventh and final layer is turn-overs, which the offense tries to completely avoid.

“Fast breaks, free throws, offensive rebounds, red zone — they’re all within ten feet of the hoop,” Finkbeiner said.

In the analytical revolution that has swept through the basketball world the past decade, shots near the rim have taken on an increased importance. And it’s not just the women’s team at Utah State that has embraced the inside game.

“It’s essential,” said Chris Jones, assistant coach for the men’s team. “If you don’t have inside scoring, then the nights you’re not making shots you have no chance to win.”

“That just makes it easy for your offense,” said sophomore center David Collette. “It gives the whole team an energy.”

While fast breaks provide the most efficient scoring opportunities — efficiency is determined by the average number of points scored per possession. For example, teams score more points per average on a fast break than on a midrange shot — they make up only a small percentage of plays run.

Both the men’s and women’s teams will run high-speed, up-tempo offenses this season, but have different strategies to get shots in the paint in a half-court offense.

David Collette, for example, is an effective low-post scorer; the team will focus on getting him the ball

with his back to the basket multiple times per game, Jones said.

The women, though, don’t have a player like that, so they will focus more on movement and penetration, using a variation of the dribble-drive offense made famous by John Calipari when he led his Memphis team to the Final Four in 2008.

“It’s spread and there’s a lot of gaps,” Finkbeiner said. “It’s all about penetrating those gaps and going all the way.”

The wide-open play that both teams will incorporate will provide for a lot of highlight opportunities.

“It’s an exciting game and the fans love it,” Finkbeiner said. “My goal is that we can be top five in the country in points and steals.”

The most exciting play — one that Aggie fans will get to see a lot of, according to Jones — is the dunk.

“It pumps your team up, it pumps the crowd up, it gives your team confidence,” Jones said.

Collette knows that first hand. The center led the Aggies in dunks last year as a freshman, including a powerful one-handed slam at New Mexico when he caught the ball near the top of the key, pump-faked the defender, took one dribble and threw it down over another defender.

“It’s a huge confidence boost because once you get that first one you feel like



PHOTO BY **Kylee Larsen**
Jalen Moore

Superman,” Collette said. “The crowd loves them, but for me I get one and I’m trying to dunk everything else.”

Even players who don’t spend as much time in the paint as the big man see the effect.

“Dunks are what all the fans want to see,” said senior guard Chris Smith. “When you dunk, especially on somebody, that’s when the Spectrum gets even crazier.”

The highlights aren’t limited to the men’s team, either — even dunks. When USU hosted its Primetime Madness event on Oct. 8, Aggie fans got a glimpse of the athleticism on the women’s team as junior forward Antoina Robinson and freshman guard Katie Toole each attempted

dunks during warm-ups.

Robinson has been dunking since she was at New Mexico Junior College — “Hurt my finger a couple times doing it,” she said — when her teammate Angelica de Paulo, who also transferred to USU after her time in New Mexico, encouraged Robinson to try.

“We were just fooling around and she told me to try it,” Robinson said. “I was afraid so she just gave me the ball and told me to go to half court.”

In November of 2009, Brittney Griner became the seventh woman to dunk in a collegiate basketball game. Robinson thinks she can be the eighth.

“I’m going to get in the moment and just go for it,” she said.



The not so friendly confines of the Spectrum

By **Ben Fordham**

The Dee Glen Smith Spectrum is notorious for having one of the most electrifying and hostile crowds in collegiate basketball.

"The student section pours out an incredible amount of energy and spirit during basketball games," said junior Blake Lyman. "The Spectrum is a smaller arena with gorgeously tacky seats, but it's an intimidating environment that rattles opposing teams."

Under Stew Morrill, the men's basketball team won 248 out of 281 home games.

"USU always has a chance to win when the students show up and support," said senior Jeff Thompson. "I expect the Ag-

gies to win every home game."

Student attendance in the Spectrum has declined in recent years as USU has struggled to become a powerhouse in the Mountain West Conference.

"In the glory days of the Spectrum, every student showed up to games no matter what because we all felt like we added something to the game," said former front-row fan, Matt Sonnenberg. "The fans wanted to be something that opposing teams couldn't overcome."

The Spectrum holds a special place in the hearts of those who eat, drink and sleep Aggie basketball.

"We played Brandon Davies and BYU in 2011, and it was a fun experience," Ly-

man said. "We hate BYU and love making fun of people so those two variables combined for a rockstar night."

The golden era of Aggie dominance in the Western Athletic Conference from 2007 to 2011 provided special memories for many USU students.

"In 2009 we played Nevada and their coach called us out in the media before the game by saying crowd noise doesn't affect basketball games," Sonnenberg said. "The crowd was unreal that night. Ask anyone about that game and they'll get goosebumps just thinking about it."

I urge every student to make Aggie basketball a priority this season.



LOVE SPORTS? WE NEED YOU.

USU students, if you're interested in sports journalism or just love Aggie sports: Visit us in TSC room 311, or send an email to our sports editor, Kalen Taylor at kalen.s.taylor@gmail.com.

parade®

Make it Special, Make it Jerrick's

Jerrick's Fine Jewelry
(435) 753-9755
930 N Main • Logan, Ut.

SAVE TIME
Shop
ONLINE

Lee's
ONLINE
Rosle

Meet Your New BFF!

First Grocery Delivery is
FREE!
Up to 3 miles from store location

Promo code:
delivery15

Sign up at
leesmarketplace.com

ONLINE
OR
DELIVERY

WOMEN

Courtesy of
USU Media Relations

LOGAN, Utah – Utah State women's basketball has been picked ninth in the Mountain West Women's Basketball Preseason Poll as voted on by a panel of the league's 11 head coaches and media representatives. The poll results were announced Wednesday morning by the conference.

Colorado State, the 2014-15 regular-season champion, was picked to finish first in the conference with 237 points, including 12 first-place votes. New Mexico was tabbed second with 221 total points and seven first-place votes, while last season's tournament champion, Boise State, came in third with 215 points, including six first-place votes. Fresno State was selected fourth with 182 points, followed by UNLV (138 points) and San Diego State (135 points). Wyoming was slated seventh (125), with San José State coming in eighth (93). The Aggies hold the ninth-place spot with 79 points, one point ahead of Nevada in ninth with 78. Air Force rounds out the 11-team poll with 26 points.

Utah State sophomore guard Funda Nakkasoglu, the defending MW Freshman of the Year, was selected to the Preseason All-Mountain West Team. Nakkasoglu is the first Utah State player to receive the preseason nod since the Aggies joined the Mountain West. She is the first to be named to the preseason all-conference list since Devyn Christensen was named to the Preseason All-Western Athletic Conference First-Team prior to the 2012-13 season.

Joining Nakkasoglu on the preseason team is Boise State junior guard Brooke Pahukoa, Colorado State junior guard Ellen Nystrom, New Mexico senior forward Khadijah Shumpert and Wyoming senior guard Marquell Dent.

Dent was also named the Preseason Player of the Year, the third-straight season a Wyoming player has received the honor. New Mexico freshman guard Jannon Otto was named Preseason Freshman of the Year, while Nevada's Stephanie Schmid and San José State's Dezz Ramos shared the Newcomer of the Year accolade.

2014-15 Mountain West Preseason Poll

Rk.	Team (First-Place Votes)	Points
1.	Colorado State	(12) 237
2.	New Mexico	(7) 221
3.	Boise State	(6) 215
4.	Fresno State	182
5.	UNLV	138
6.	San Diego State	135
7.	Wyoming	125
8.	San José State	93
9.	Utah State	79
10.	Nevada	78
11.	Air Force	26



PHOTOS BY **Kylee Larsen**
Funda Nakkasoglu

MEN

2014-15 Mountain West Preseason Poll

Rk.	Team (First-Place Votes)	Points
1.	San Diego State	272 (22)
2.	Boise State	234 (2)
3.	Utah State	190
4.	UNLV	184
5.	Fresno State	182 (1)
6.	New Mexico	164
7.	Colorado State	144
8.	Wyoming	101
9.	Nevada	97
10.	Air Force	51
11.	San José State	30

Courtesy of USU Media Relations

LOGAN, Utah - Utah State men's basketball has been selected third in the annual preseason Mountain West men's basketball poll, as announced by the conference offices on Tuesday morning. The prediction is the highest for the Aggies since joining the Mountain West and highest since USU was selected to win the Western Athletic Conference in its final season in the league during the 2012-13 season.

"We've got five starters returning and experience means a lot and will always mean a lot in college basketball," head coach Tim Duryea said of the Aggies' spot in the poll. "It is a great place to start."

Defending champion San Diego State was selected first in the poll, receiving 22 of 25 first-place votes and 272 points. Boise State followed in second place with a pair of first-place votes and 234 points. Utah State was third with 190, UNLV in fourth with 185 and Fresno State in fifth with 182 points and the final first-place vote.

"The Mountain West has

gone through San Diego State for quite a while and will continue to do so until someone proves otherwise," Duryea said. "Boise had a great year last year and has three really good players returning. It is no surprise that people hold them in high regard."

New Mexico (164) and Colorado State (144) were selected sixth and seventh, with Wyoming (101), Nevada (97), Air Force (51) and San José State (30) rounding out the poll in eighth through 11th.

Utah State was without a player on the preseason all-Mountain West team, made up of Fresno State senior guard Marvelle Harris, Boise State redshirt senior guard Anthony Drmic, Boise State junior forward James Webb III, Wyoming senior guard Josh Adams and San Diego State senior forward Winston Shepard. Harris was also picked as the preseason Player of the Year.

New Mexico junior forward Tim Williams and UNLV freshman Stephen Zimmerman rounded out the preseason honors as Newcomer and Freshman of the Year, respectively.



Chris Smith

MENS

Date **Opponent**

11/06	Cal State Monterey Bay
11/17	Adams State
11/20	Union (Tenn.)
11/24	Utah Valley
12/12	UC IRVINE
01/02	San Diego State
01/05	Boise State
01/12	Air Force
01/19	UNLV
01/30	Nevada
02/09	New Mexico
02/17	Colorado State
02/27	San Jose State
03/05	Fresno State

WOMENS

Date **Opponent**

11/07	Dixie State
11/14	Sacramento State
11/16	Westminster
11/21	Pacific
12/04	Haskell Indian Nations University
12/22	Utah
12/30	San Jose State
01/09	New Mexico
01/16	Colorado State
01/23	San Diego State
02/03	Boise State
02/06	Wyoming
02/20	Fresno State
02/24	Nevada
03/01	Air Force

\$10

**STATE SAFETY
INSPECTION**

Not valid with any other offer

10%

**OFF LABOR
W/ STUDENT ID**

Not valid with any other offer

\$31.95

OIL CHANGE

-42 Point Inspection
-5 Quarts of Reg. Oil & Oil Filter included

Not valid with any other offer



435 • 754 • 7474

Hours 8am-6pm • Closed Sat. & Sun.

390 N 1000 W • Logan

WWW.AARONSELITE.COM



AUTO REPAIR SERVICES YOU CAN COUNT ON!

**BRAKES • TIRES • GENERAL REPAIR • HEATING & COOLING • ELECTRICAL
TRANSMISSION • DRIVE TRAIN REPAIR •
INTERNAL ENGINE REPAIR • DIESEL REPAIR • RADIATORS**

15-16 HOME BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

NOT SO FREE

By Jeffrey Dahdah

Fifteen feet.

It's the same anywhere, anytime. It's the same in a back yard or in a gym. It's the same alone or in front of thousands of people. It's 15 feet. No matter the situation, a free throw is a free throw. They are the same. Except when they're not.

Not all free throws are created equal. There are constants — the ball, the rim, the distance — but the mental aspect is always changing.

Free throws have a cruel simplicity. Nobody can try to block them — they are straight on and relatively close. Some people use that to their advantage, but when it becomes mental, free throws become a much more difficult shot. The problem is, they are always mental.

"You've kind of got to get out of your way mentally," said Utah State men's basketball coach Tim Duryea.

Some athletes will get out of their own way by tuning everything else out.

"I take out the spectators around me and focus on the rim," said sophomore guard Funda Nakkasoglu, who shot 80 percent from the free-throw line last season.

Others focus on their routine.

"I've been doing it ever since I started playing," said junior wing Jalen Moore, who shot 74 percent from the line last season. "Three dribbles, spin the ball, take your time and knock it in."

Simple. Focus, get a rou-

"You've kind of got to get out of your way mentally."

— Tim Duryea

tine, "knock it in." But even the most casual of basketball fans knows that the charity stripe is not always so charitable.

There are always those players who dread the line and teams that plan around fouling that player. For some players, that free throw line may as well be a half-court shot.

"I see guys that shoot 40 percent or something and I'm like, that's mental," Moore said. "Some guys could have good form and still can't make them."

There are ways to treat it.



Darius Perkins



PHOTOS BY **Johnny Morris**
David Collette

Though the mental aspect is huge, the form still has to be there.

The physical side is where both Duryea and USU women's basketball coach Jerry Finkbeiner start.

They coach footwork, release, simplicity.

Finkbeiner said if he needs to work on free throws with one of his players he starts with footwork. He makes sure they are squared and actually using their legs. He then makes sure they are not using their upper body too much, essentially keeping what is going on above the waist from ruining the shot. He will then evaluate the follow-through. All of this while deliberately focusing on what the body, not the mind, is doing.

"We try to make it objec-

tive and educational and stay away from emotional and mental side of it," Finkbeiner said.

Duryea will focus on making sure a routine and fluid motion is there if he needs to work on free throws. He wants his players to eliminate wasted motion and focus on a simple, smooth and ultimately repeatable shot.

"It's all about being able to do something not only one time, but ten times in a row, 100 times in a row," he said.

The coaches will also try to simulate high pressure situations in practice. They will impose situations like sprints for missed free throws or changing where in practice there will be shots.

But nothing can quite

compensate for late game, high pressure situations with thousands of eyes hungrily watching a well-lit player standing 15 feet away from a crucial point.

Nakkasoglu said that she and her teammates are well aware of those crucial situations.

"I think everyone knows by now it's D1 basketball. You need to learn to do that," she said.

Some players even relish it.

"I love when you go up there and they are loud and you knock in both free throws and they quiet," Moore said. "It makes it more fun."

Both Duryea and Finkbeiner said that in those late game situations, they don't talk about free throws. They just let their

players go out and shoot, then they plan for after the shot.

Nobody doubts how critical free throws are or how often games can come down to them.

"A lot of times games will come down to one point, two points and you will look at your free-throw stats and you're like, 'If you would have made three more free-throws you would have won the game,'" Moore said.

Any given USU basketball player has shot thousands of free throws in their lives at varying levels. But none have shot 100 percent. Yes, physically free-throws are all the same, but they are the most uncertain certainty in the sport.

FAMILY AFFAIR

By **Jeffrey Dahdah**

When Jalen and Grayson Moore both stepped onto the court in Utah State University's first preseason game against Oklahoma Panhandle State, their father, Jimmy, was watching in the stands.

"It was very emotional for me," Jimmy said.

If there was a family that bleeds blue, it would be the Moores. Jimmy played at USU from 1972-75, coached the Aggies for a while and is now an assistant athletic director for the university. Jalen and Grayson grew up in the valley, eventually attending Sky View High School. They grew up — predictably — big Aggie fans.

"From the time they were small they always came up to basketball camps here. They always wanted to be Aggies," Jimmy said.

As a result the brothers grew up in the stands of the Dee Glenn Smith Spectrum watching generations of Aggies take the court. Now they are taking that court together.

"It was our goal to always be able to play here," Jalen said. "Our dad played here so we kind of wanted to follow in his footsteps."

For Jalen it was a simpler path to the Spectrum than Grayson. Jalen went from Sky View to USU and even played his freshmen year. Grayson however, left Sky View and played a year of junior college at Sheridan College in Wyoming. He then played two years at Northwest Nazarene before



PHOTO COURTESY OF JIMMY MOORE

(Left) Jalen Moore and (Right) Grayson Moore

transferring to USU last year.

"I'm really happy for Grayson," Jimmy said. "He ended up here where he always wanted to be."

Grayson redshirted last season for the Aggies while he graduated with a bachelor's degree. This year he is using his final year of eligibility while working on his master's degree.

Jalen and Grayson never really played together in high school or junior high because of their two-year age gap. The

odds of them playing together after high school was always slim, but they always thought of it as a possibility.

"They always talked about maybe having the opportunity to play college ball together but the reality of that happening is very small," Jimmy said.

Now they are, and the Moores don't take for granted the uniqueness of their situation.

"It's way cool being able to be like 'I played with my brother in college,'" Ja-



PHOTOS BY Kylee Larsen



len said. “A lot of people don’t get to say that.”

They may be on the same team now, but growing up, they were in competition with each other. The Moores said their competition on the court would get intense.

“You know how brothers are — you start playing, someone is winning, the other brother is getting mad,” Jalen said. “There would be times when we would go up for a layup and push each other.”

They said those pushes were accidental at times, but common. Both brothers also say those games pushed each other to be better. Plus a little healthy competition never hurt anyone.

“When we played against each other in early high school we couldn’t ever finish a game because it would end up in a fight,” Grayson said. “It’s funny though, towards the end — probably

by my senior year in high school — we became best friends, just hanging out all of the time.”

Their friendship and competition lead to a connection on the court. Grayson knows how Jalen plays and Jalen knows Grayson.

“ It was our goal to always be able to play here. ”

— Jalen Moore

“We have a really good understanding of what type of player each of us are and kind of what we’re going to do next,” Grayson said. “If I’m driving I know how to set Jalen up for a shot and if he’s driving I know where to be so he can find me.”

The brothers get one year together on the court, but even that one year means so much to the Moore family.

“It’s just awesome being able to play together,” Jalen said. “It’s different having a brother compared to someone else who is on your team.”

For Jimmy, it’s almost too exciting to put into words.

“It’s hard to describe, you have to actually experience it,” he said. “It’s unbelievable. It’s a dream come true.”

This season two Moores will take the court, play defense, pass and shoot the ball. And this season one Moore will be watching from somewhere inside the Spectrum every time, waiting to critique his two boys.

It’s safe to say this will be a special season for the Moore family.

3 POINT SHOTS

By **Thomas Sorenson**

Facing Air Force on Jan. 17, 2015, the Utah State men's basketball team held a 28-21 lead over the visitors.

Head coach Stew Morrill called a timeout with six seconds left and drew up a play intended to get a quick post look. Point guard Darius Perkins received the ball, but a quick trap took away the inside look he wanted. He instead swung the ball to guard Chris Smith, who buried a contested 3-pointer over two defenders, sending the Spectrum crowd into a frenzy.

"It feels good because you throw it up in the air and everybody goes crazy," Smith said. "Especially in the Spectrum, it gets nuts in here. It's a great feeling in this place."

It was one of 13 3-pointers the Aggies hit against the Falcons that game. USU attempted a whopping 591 last season, good for second in the conference.

Smith, now a senior, led the Aggies in 3-point shooting last year, hitting 63-133 for 47 percent on the season. He was one of three players to

make 45 or more 3's and hit 39 percent or more of them, including senior guard Darius Perkins and junior wing Jalen Moore. Sophomore Julian Pearre also made 36-105 from deep, giving USU a quartet of capable shooters.

The ability to shoot from deep does three things for an offense: It creates space for the big men to operate under the basket, it creates seams for playmaking guards to

drive to the basket and it punishes defenses that give too much space to the shooters.

"If you don't have anybody who can shoot, then everybody can just sit in the lane," said Chris Jones, in his eighth season as an assistant coach at USU. "It's hard to get the ball into the post and it's hard to get the ball penetrated."

The coaching staff at Utah State has focused on bringing

in players who can create space and take advantage of it.

"Our priority is to have multi-skilled guards and forwards that can shoot 3's and can also drive the ball," Jones said. "We have the ability to score in the paint in two ways: the post feed and via penetration."

Creating shots at the rim is critical to Utah State's success.



PHOTO BY **Kylee Larsen**
Jalen Moore

"We've always been an inside-out program," Jones said. "Coach Morrill was always that way and Coach Duryea will be the exact same way."

Jerry Finkbeiner, the head coach of the women's basketball team, researched the most effective plays on a basketball court. He found that, in terms of average points per play, 3-point shots were just a step below shots at the rim and were significantly higher than mid-range shots.

"We want all in the red zone and all behind the 3," Finkbeiner said, referring the area within 10 feet of the hoop. "We don't want to take anything in the mid-range."

The ability to shoot from deep and to score in the paint work together, putting the defense in uncom-

fortable positions and creating opportunities for the offense. Neither the men's nor women's coaches runs many set plays; rather, they focus on teaching concepts and letting the athletes on the floor make plays.

"It's not really sets, it's more concept and more situation-oriented," Jones said. "We want to have basically four players on the perimeter — spaced out beyond the NBA 3 — and they are taught to cut, space and move, which opens up the floor for driving lanes."

Finkbeiner agreed, pointing to the "Aggie offense" his team runs.

"It's spread; There's a lot of gaps," Finkbeiner said. "If there's any kind of help side [defense] or a collapse then we dish out for 3. If there's no 3 then we drive to the basket and if it col-

lapses then she'll dish out for another 3. If it's a wide open 3, we'll take it. If not, she'll drive."

"In simplicity," Finkbeiner explained, "it's all about driving to the hole and if it collapses, dish out for a three."

The player movement and the passing creates a swirling effect, leaving defenders to chase the ball and the players until the offense gets a shot that it likes. It's a nightmare situation for a defense.

The success of the offense, though, hinges on the threat of 3-point shooting.

"The only way to space the floor is, you've got to have guys who can shoot," Jones said.



**Need
someone
who speaks
fluent
insurance?**

I can help you get the right coverage at the right price.

Don't pay for unnecessary extras. I'm here to help make sure you understand your options so you can choose the right coverage without getting lost in translation.

Get to a better State®.

Get State Farm®.

CALL ME TODAY.

Lana Powell Insurance Agency Inc

Lana Powell, Agent
550 North Main Street
Logan, UT 84321
Bus: 435-752-7639



CONFERENCE PREVIEW



SAN JOSE STATE

LAST SEASON

MEN	WOMEN
WIN 76-55	LOSS 62-58
WIN 61-33	WIN 85-80
	LOSS 99-85

THIS SEASON

MEN	WOMEN
AWAY 12/30	HOME 12/30
HOME 2/27	AWAY 2/27

MEN

The San Jose State Spartans were one of the worst teams in the nation last year, going 0-28 against Division I opponents and finishing 346th out of 351 schools in the Basketball Power Index ranking. Two of the Spartans' top three scorers were suspended mid-season for violations of team rules; things got so bad in San Jose last year that members of the football team were called up to fill roster spots. Things don't look much more opti-

mistic this year, either. Four of the top five scorers from last year are gone from the team and only one player on the roster has averaged more than seven points per game. Head coach Dave Wojcik has a lot of work to do to make the Spartans competitive in the Mountain West.

WOMEN

The San Jose State women's team finished eighth in the conference last season, but got hot in the tournament and made it all the way to the semifinal game, knocking off top-seeded Colorado State along the way. Last season's leading scorer Ta'Rea Cunnigan and all-tournament player Rebecca Woodberry are gone this year, leaving a hole in the Spartan offense. That hole will be partially filled by preseason co-new-

comer of the year Dezz Ramos, a point guard who transferred to San Jose from Weber State. She averaged 10.4 points, 3.5 assists and over a steal per game for the Wildcats and is expected to make an immediate impact for the Spartans. Junior guard Aniya Baker led the team in assists in 2014-15 and senior center Riana Byrd holds the school's single-season record for blocked shots with 64.

CONFERENCE PREVIEW



SAN DIEGO STATE

LAST SEASON

MEN

LOSS 62-42

WOMEN

LOSS 70-59

THIS SEASON

MEN

AWAY 1/02
HOME 1/23

WOMEN

HOME 1/23
AWAY 1/02

MEN

The Aztecs have dominated the Mountain West, winning at least a share of the regular season title every year since 2011. San Diego State has also appeared in the NCAA Tournament six years running and has won at least one game in the tournament each of the past three years. The team will get a boost with the return of sophomore forward Malik Pope, who flirted with the NBA but decided to come back to school for at least

one more year. Freshman shooting guard Jeremy Hemsley, an ESPN Top-100 recruit who also received offers from Arizona State, Gonzaga and others, gives the Aztecs even more athleticism on the wings and is expected to contribute from the start. SDSU should be in contention for another conference title and a seventh-consecutive tournament appearance this year.

Four freshmen played for the Aztecs last year and three of the four played in 30 or more games, including point guard McKynzie Fort. The 5'9" guard played the most minutes on the team, starting 24 of 31 games and averaging just over 10 points per game. The Aztecs finished seventh in the conference, losing in the second round of the tournament to New Mexico. Three of last year's starters are gone, but much

WOMEN

of the rest of the rotation is returning. Though the team struggled because of the youth last year, that should pay dividends going forward. Head coach Stacie Terry's squad was ranked fourth in the conference in scoring defense last season and expect to build on that this year.

CONFERENCE PREVIEW



BOISE STATE

LAST SEASON

THIS SEASON

MEN

WOMEN

WIN 62-61
LOSS 68-63

LOSS 63-53
LOSS 94-55

MEN

HOME 01/05
AWAY 02/02

WOMEN

AWAY 01/06
HOME 2/03

MEN

The Broncos were a surprise in the Mountain West last season, finishing 14-4 and tied with San Diego State for a share of the conference title. Gone is 2014-15 conference player of the year Derrick Marks, but BSU still has plenty of pieces to contend with uber-athletic forward James Webb III, shooter Nick Duncan and scoring guard/forward Anthony Drmic returning. Drmic missed all but seven games last year with an inju-

ry, but has an outside shot to be the best player in the conference this season. Leon Rice has proven himself to be one of the best coaches in the conference, making the team competitive on and off the court; true freshman point guard Paris Austin was a four-star recruit and one of the top players in the state of California.

Boise State finished the regular season with an 11-7 record in conference, good for fourth in the Mountain West, but ran through the tournament in Las Vegas to claim it's first tournament title. Led by preseason all-conference guard Brooke Pahukoa, BSU will look to build on that success this season. The Broncos return three of their five starters from last year, but lose a lot of experience; 48 percent of

the points scored last season and 67 percent of the minutes played were by women who are not on the roster this year. Boise's depth will be tested this season with five true freshmen and another redshirt freshman on the squad. Pahukoa will have to take on a larger offensive burden for the Broncos to replicate the success of last season.

CONFERENCE PREVIEW



NEW MEXICO

LAST SEASON

THIS SEASON

MEN

WOMEN

WIN 63-60
LOSS 66-60

LOSS 60-59
LOSS 56-51

MEN

HOME 01/09
AWAY 02/09

WOMEN

HOME 01/09
AWAY 2/10

MEN

Sophomore guard Cullen Neal started last season with 49 points in the first two games, but blew out his ankle in the third game and missed the rest of the year. Head coach Craig Neal's son will be expected to carry the Lobos in 2015-16, as they lost Deshawn Delaney and Hugh Greenwood, two of their best players. 7'1" junior center Obij Aget saw rapid improvement for New Mexico last season, starting all 31 games and quadrupling his numbers from his freshman

campaign. He has the size and length to be a dominant force in the conference. Red-shirt junior forward Devon Williams also took a leap last year, starting 30 games and scoring double-digit points in seven different games. He was second on the team in offensive rebounds in 2014-15 and also recorded a steal in eight straight games last December. If everything comes together, the Lobos have the talent to return to the top of the conference this year.

WOMEN

The Lobos finished second in the regular season standings and second in the tournament in Las Vegas last year and were picked to finish second again this season in the preseason polls. New Mexico might have the experience to make a run at the top spot this time around, though; of the five players who are gone from last year's team, only one averaged more than nine minutes per game. 6'0" senior forward Khadijah

Shumpert is the highest returning scorer, averaging just over 10 points per game, and was selected to the preseason all-conference team. Sophomore guard Cherise Beynon started all 34 games last year as a freshman, averaging just over eight points per game. Senior guard Bryce Owens also averaged just over eight points per game and is the deep threat on the roster, having shot 116 of the team's 389 total 3's last season.

CONFERENCE PREVIEW



WYOMING

LAST SEASON

MEN

WIN 56-44
LOSS 76-53
LOSS 67-65

WOMEN

LOSS 86-51
LOSS 61-57

THIS SEASON

MEN

HOME 2/06

WOMEN

AWAY 2/06

MEN

Last season Wyoming won the Mountain West tournament. The Cowboys had 25 wins, their most in 27 years. Then four starters left, including Larry Nance Jr. who is now a Los Angeles Laker. Senior guard Josh Adams will lead the team now as a senior and only returning starter. Adams averaged 12.8 points per game last season. Wyoming has fallen down in expectations and they are picked to finish eighth in the

preseason MW poll. There are eight new players on the team, six freshmen and two transfers. Junior guard Jason McManamen will also likely step into a more influential role than last season. He played in every game last season, averaging more than 16 rebounds per game while averaging 3.7 points per game.

WOMEN

The Cowgirls finished fifth in the conference last season with a 10-8 record and 16-14 overall. They were picked to finish seventh in the conference this season. The Cowgirls are picked in the middle of the pack despite wide respect for senior guard Marquelle Dent, who was picked as preseason player of the year for the MW. Dent had 17.7 points per game last season on top of six assists

per game. They do lose three starters in Kaitlyn Mileto, Jordan Sibrel and Kayla Woodward. Mileto and Woodward both averaged in double digits last season in points. They are returning eight letter winners including Dent and senior guard Jordan Kelley, who started last season.

CONFERENCE PREVIEW



COLORADO STATE

LAST SEASON

MEN

LOSS 75-70

WOMEN

LOSS 76-58

THIS SEASON

MEN

HOME 1/16
AWAY 2/17

WOMEN

AWAY 1/16
HOME 2/17

MEN

Colorado State finished third in the MW last season. The Rams have become a solid team in the MW in the last few seasons. They finished 27-7 last season and 13-5 in conference. The Rams beat the Aggies in Logan last season. They also went to the NIT and lost in the first round. The Rams have been picked to finish seventh in the MW preseason coaches poll. CSU lost some key players from last

season including J.J. Avila, Daniel Bejarano and Stanton Kidd. The three were the scoring leaders for the Rams last season scoring 39.7 points per game between each other. The Rams will look to senior forward Tiel Daniels and senior guard Joe De Ciman to pick up the slack for the departed sophomores.

WOMEN

The Colorado State women's basketball team won the MW conference last season for the second year in a row. This season they are picked to do the same. They finished with a 15-3 record in conference and 23-8 overall. They will be led by junior guard Ellen Nystrom who was picked to the preseason all-conference team. Nystrom averaged 7.7 points per game, 7.3 rebounds per game and

four assists per game. The Rams beat the Aggies in the regular season finale last year in Fort Collins. USU has not beaten CSU since joining the Mountain West.

CONFERENCE PREVIEW



FRESNO STATE



LAST SEASON

THIS SEASON

MEN

WOMEN

LOSS 61-52
WIN 85-79

LOSS 70-64
WIN 64-55

MEN

AWAY 2/20
HOME 3/05

WOMEN

HOME 2/20
AWAY 3/04

MEN

WOMEN

Fresno State finished sixth in the MW last season. They finished 15-17 overall last season including a season split with the Aggies. The Bulldogs are expected to rebound slightly this season as they were picked fifth in the preseason conference coaches poll. Senior Guard Marvelle Harris is a large reason for the higher hopes for the Bulldogs. He was picked as preseason MW player of the year from the conference media. Harris averaged 16.4

points per game last season. He also led the team in rebounds with five rebounds per game. Two of the Aggies' final five games are against the Bulldogs. The Bulldogs also return senior guard Cezar Guerrero who was second on the team in points with 11.7.

Fresno State won 23 total games last year including 13 in conference. They also had 10 total losses. That was good enough for the Bulldogs to finish third in the MW. This season they are picked fourth in the preseason polls. Fresno State lost their key player from last year, forward Alex Sheedy. Sheedy averaged 15.9 points per game and 7.1 rebounds per game last season and was awarded co-player of the year in

the MW. They will return senior guard Toni Smith who contributed 8.5 points per game last season and senior forwards Shauquan Collins and Alex Furr who both averaged 7.8 points per game. The Aggies lost twice to the Bulldogs last season and have still not defeated their former Western Athletic Conference foe since joining the Mountain West two seasons ago.

CONFERENCE PREVIEW



UNLV

LAST SEASON

MEN

LOSS 79-77
WIN 83-65

WOMEN

WIN 85-72
LOSS 69-61

THIS SEASON

MEN

AWAY 1/20

WOMEN

HOME 1/19

MEN

UNLV is going to put the “Runnin’” in Runnin’ Rebels this year — at least, that’s what head coach Dave Rice has said. Less than half of the team was on the roster in 2014-15, but a number of high-profile recruits and transfers will give UNLV better depth than it had last year. Not least among the freshman will be 7’0” center Stephen Zimmerman, Jr., who was rated by ESPN as the 12th best recruit of the 2015 class. Another new player to watch is senior

guard Ike Nwamu, a transfer player from Mercer who sat out last season because of transfer rules, but has the potential to be a double-digit scorer for Rice’s squad. Junior Daquan Cook is expected to be a contributor after missing all of last season with a torn ACL, but was arrested for DUI and will be suspended for at least the first two months of the season.

The Rebels struggled in 2014-15, posting a 13-17 record and finishing fifth in the conference. The top two scorers from last year’s team are gone, but senior center Aley Rohde started every game for UNLV last year, averaging nearly nine points and seven rebounds per game. She is joined by diminutive sophomore point guard Nikki Wheatley, who started 24 games a year ago. She averaged just over seven points per game and a surprising 4.5 re-

WOMEN

bounds, despite her 5’5” build. The third returning starter is sophomore wing Brooke Johnson, a 32 percent career 3-point shooter. Though the Lady Rebels are returning multiple starters, the depth of the team is very much in question. Sophomore forward Alyssa Anderson will miss the season with a torn ACL and junior Diamond Major retired due to concussions. UNLV will start the season with only 10 active players.

CONFERENCE PREVIEW



AIR FORCE

LAST SEASON

MEN

WIN 71-59
WIN 74-60

WOMEN

WIN 84-50
WIN 69-53

THIS SEASON

MEN

HOME 01/12
AWAY 03/27

WOMEN

HOME 03/01
AWAY 01/13



MEN

The Air Force Falcons have not had a winning record since 2007-08, including a forgettable 14-17 season a year ago. The Falcons won only one true road game all year and lost two-thirds of their games in the Mountain West. To make matters worse, the Academy lost its top three scorers from last season and doesn't return a single player who averaged more than nine points per game. Colorado Springs isn't

an easy place for visiting teams, though; Air Force posted an 11-5 home record and five of its six conference wins were at home. The Falcons did make some noise in the conference tournament, losing in the second round to Boise State after knocking off New Mexico. Guard Zach Kocur, now a junior, led the team in scoring in Las Vegas with 16.5 per game.

Air Force brings back only two women who started more than 15 games a season ago, but sophomore point guard Cortney Porter had a stellar freshman campaign. She started the final 29 games of the season and set the school freshman record for assists, averaging 3.9 per game. She also finished third in the school rankings for most steals in a season with 58. Porter is

WOMEN

joined by senior guard/forward Madeleine Philpot who also started 29 games, setting the school record for free throw percentage at 91.8 percent. She averaged only seven points per game, but led the team in rebounding. In spite of the individual success, Air Force was awful last year, winning only one game in conference and finishing 2-28 for the season.

CONFERENCE PREVIEW



NEVADA

LAST SEASON

MEN	WOMEN
WIN 70-54	WIN 68-57
WIN 75-62	LOSS 49-44

MEN

The Nevada Wolfpack finished the 2014-2015 season with a 9-22 record. The Pack struggle with consistency but showed flashes of potential. This year they bring in a new head coach, Eric Musselman. The strength of last year's team was rebounding. Nevada grabbed 39 boards per game and had a better rebound rate than its opponents by an average margin

of 5.4. AJ West is the premier player on Nevada's team. He led the team in scoring with 12 points per game and rebounds with 11. He's one of only 15 players in the NCAA to average a double-double. West comes back primed for a big senior season after leading the NCAA in offensive rebounds with 5.9 per game.

THIS SEASON

MEN	WOMEN
HOME 1/30	AWAY 1/30
AWAY 2/24	HOME 2/24

WOMEN

Nevada went 9-21 on the year after losing top-scorer Terilyn Moe after just four games. Moe played over 30 minutes per contest and was averaging 16 points, six rebounds and five assists per game. From there Mimi Mungedi took over and averaged 13 points per game on the season. For the 2016 season the Wolfpack gets Moe back but lose Mungedi. Top return-

ers include Kelsey Kaelin who averaged over 24 minutes a game and Nyasha Lesure who started 14 games and scored six points per game and led the team in steals with 24 on the year. Nevada needs to flip the stats of minus five on turnover margin and only shooting 27 percent from behind the 3-point arc in order to change results this season.



KUBEX[®]

KUBEXFITNESS.COM

3 SEQUENCES



HUGE CARDIO



PRIVATE KUBES



SMOOTHIE BAR



FREE TOURS



IMMACULATE FACILITY



Like No Other Gym in the World!

- 3-30 MIN PRIVATE WORKOUT SEQUENCES
- 36 MINUTE KUBEX KARDIO SEQUENCE
- HUGE CARDIO ROOM WITH INCLINE TRAINERS
- 100% WHOLE-FOOD SMOOTHIE BAR

STUDENT SPECIAL

\$29.99/mo

WITH COMMITMENT PER SEMESTER

920 NORTH 200 WEST LOGAN, UT



ZERO-FARE



**HEY, AGGIES
WITH US...
TRAVELING IS ALLOWED.**



**CALL: 752-2877
OR VISIT US AT: WWW.CVTDBUS.ORG**

Where Utah Gets Engaged!



S.E. Needham quality at internet pricing

S.E. Needham
jewelers since 1896

141 North Main • www.seneedham.com • 435-752-7149

Store Hours: Monday -Saturday 10:00 - 7:00